

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Status

No claim has been cancelled by the present amendment and claim 21 has been added. Claims 1-21 will remain for further consideration.

More Clearly Defined

The claims in this application have been revised to voluntarily further clarify Applicant's unique invention. Applicant maintains that the claims as filed were patentable over the art of record. However, to expedite issuance of this application, reconsideration of the claims in light of the amendments and for the following reasons is respectfully requested.

Claim History

The Examiner rejected claims 1-6, and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Tjonneland. The Examiner rejected claims 7, 8 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Tjonneland in view of Conti et al. The Examiner rejected claims 7, 8 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Tjonneland in view of Knauer et al.

DRAWINGS

Formal Drawings

Formal drawings were filed with the application on 9/30/2003. A review of the Office Action has failed to uncover whether the drawings were accepted by the Official Draftsman or whether a Form 948 rejection was issued by the Official Draftsman. An indication of the status of the drawings is respectfully requested with the next communication from the Patent Office.

Allowable Subject Matter, Otherwise Allowable Claims

The Examiner indicated that claims 9-13, 16 and 17 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and of any intervening claims. The indication of this allowable subject matter is noted with appreciation.

35 U.S.C. §102

The Examiner rejected claims 1-6, and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Tjonneland. The Examiner rejected claims 7, 8 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Tjonneland in view of Conti et al. The Examiner rejected claims 7, 8 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Tjonneland in view of Knauer et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The claims as amended require that a translucent fiber optic core is surrounded and enclosed by a rope for the purpose of diffusing light emitted therefrom and having a continuously and uniformly lighted appearance when said at least one light source is activated. Tjonneland merely shows a fiber optic cable that has compressive tape applied to change the direction of light at the area of compression to cause light to "leak" radially outward. This tape cannot be considered a "stranded fiber" as taught by the present invention, and is certainly not a "rope." The purpose of the invention is to light a rope so that the rope is illuminated. The tape of Tjonneland is to change the characteristics of the fiber optic to enhance the illumination of the fiberoptic cable, the complete opposite of the

current invention. For at least these reasons, the claims of the current invention should be allowed over the art of record.

35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner rejected claims 7, 8 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Tjonneland in view of Conti et al. The Examiner rejected claims 7, 8 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Tjonneland in view of Knauer et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The current invention uses a fiber optic core as the central lighting means to light a rope surrounding the fiber optic core. The use of fiber optics has many distinct advantages over other electric and chemical light sources. Fiber optic can be flexible, can extend great distances, can be used in areas where electrical sparks could cause an explosion, can be used underwater, and uses an unending power supply. The Conti reference has no bearing on the Tjonneland reference and there is no motivation to combine the two references, except through hindsight. The Tjonneland reference is merely concerned with distorting the optical structure of a light to increase the radial directional light percentage. Conti is drawn to an electroluminescent light source requiring two electrical wires to excite the powder at each location along the length of the lighting by direct chemical reaction. And even if the modular component of the Conti et al. device were added to the Tjonneland device, there is no suggestion that the "fiber optic core" (formerly translucent core) of the light would be received by the modular component, only the wires leading to the lightsource for the Tjonneland device would be received by the modular component.

Additionally, as now claimed, the lighted rope of the current claims would not be provided by the Examiner's combination of Tjonneland and Conti. There is no suggestion in Tjonneland or Conti to wrap the Tjonneland device with a rope to light the rope. There is also no suggestion to use a fiber optic light such as that of Tjonneland to light a rope. The device of Conti requires an electrical source to be provided along the entire length of the electrochemical light, which is advantageously absent in the present invention. Other advantages in the current system such as flexibility of the central core are also present that were not considered by Conti. There is no suggestion in either patent to place a fiber optic core inside a rope to provide a decorative rope light to gain the advantages of a safe fiber optic light inside of a rope. Therefore, for at least these reasons, the claims of the present application should be allowed over the art of record.

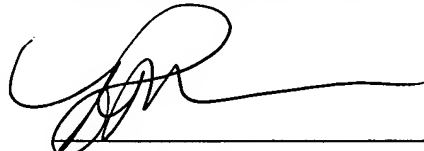
The patent to Knauer et al. merely shows the coupling of fiber optic lighting systems and does not provide the deficiency of the references above, nor does it provide motivation for combining Conti et al. and Tjonneland. Therefore, for at least these reasons, the claims of the present application should be allowed over the art of record.

Summary

Applicants have made a diligent and bona fide effort to answer each and every ground for rejection or objection to the specification including the claims and to place the application in condition for final disposition. Reconsideration and further examination is respectfully requested, and for the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition to be passed to issue and such action is earnestly solicited. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Robert N. Blackmon, Applicants' Attorney at 703-684-5633 to satisfactorily conclude the prosecution of this application.

Dated: March 15, 2005

Respectfully submitted,



Robert N. Blackmon
Reg. No. 39494
Attorney/Agent for Applicant(s)

Merek, Blackmon & Voorhees, LLC
673 S. Washington St.
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
Tel. 703-684-5633
Fax. 703-684-5637
E-mail: RNB@MBV-IP.com